Women and American History Since World War II: An Accurate Representation?

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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PURPOSE OF THESIS

The purpose of my research is to assess whether or not women's history is being represented in high school American History textbooks properly. A survey was administered to women of differing backgrounds in order to determine whether or not they were represented adequately. High school textbooks were selected because a high school diploma is the highest level of education achieved by those who were surveyed. First, the textbooks will be assessed, followed by a discussion of the survey. A copy of the survey, along with all appendices are included as well. The appendices provide further insight to the amount of women's history contained in high school American History textbooks and some of the responses to the survey given by the respondents.
BACKGROUND

High school American History textbooks are intended to include a comprehensive history of the United States. If students have an understanding of the history of their country, then they will better comprehend the present situation of their nation. As American citizens who fund the education that our children receive, we have a duty to insure that our children have access to the study of all of American history, not select portions.

Women have traditionally been excluded by textbooks which are used in American history classrooms all across the nation. With 1992 being described as the "Year of the Woman" in politics, and the resurgence of women's issues, one might conclude that history would be a logical place to start to give children an understanding of the importance of women. This is not being done.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, a new era in the women's movement ensued. The term feminist was born and women's issues such as equal pay, affirmative action, and equality became significant components of the public discourse. Women's groups, including the National Organization for Women (NOW), were formed. NOW established set objectives at its second national conference in November, 1967. A women's Bill of Rights was formulated, and its eight sections were the following:

1. The Equal Rights Amendment;
2. Enforcement of laws banning sex discrimination in employment;
3. Maternity leave rights in employment and in social security benefits;
4. Tax deduction for home and child care expenses for working parents;
5. Child care centers;
6. Equal and desegregated education;
7. Equal job training opportunities and allowances for women in poverty; and
8. The right of women to control their reproductive lives (Deckard, 1983: 325).

From the onset of the adoption of the platforms contained in the women's Bill of Rights, factions of NOW were beginning to emerge. For example, women from the United Auto Workers (UAW) union objected to the inclusion of the Equal Rights Amendment platform because the official union position was in opposition to the amendment. As a result, it withdrew its secretarial services; the UAW women constituted most of the secretarial workers of NOW. Also, the passage of the abortion platform lead to a walkout. The opponents felt that abortion was not a feminist issue, and that if NOW was a proponent of abortion, it would destroy the effectiveness of the organization (Deckard, 1983: 325-326). The controversies that existed in NOW are still part of the women's movement today. Because of this schism there remains a conflict over what should and what should not be included in historical textbooks.

Not only are women themselves divided over how they want to be represented, but historians are continually debating the context and objectives of textbooks, and how women should be included. Kaltsounis (1988) critiques the assessment of the report, "American History Textbooks: An Assessment of Quality." He explains that the concept of history implied in the report is narrow because the report states that textbooks "should not act as cheerleaders for minorities," (Kaltsounis, 1988: 28). The author goes on to
illustrate that the preference shown to "statesmen, military heroes and treaty makers" puts the writers of the report, "at an era prior to the... revolution among historians who turned their attention to such new topics as... the history of families and communities, minorities and women," (Kaltsounis, 1988: 28). This revolution has occurred since the 1960s when the women's movement and the civil rights movements were gaining in momentum and popularity. Although some historians take the social historical approach, there are others who disagree with Kaltsounis' conclusions.

Sewall (1988) argues that textbook reforms since the 1960s have been based on political factions: "They [individuals and groups] may feel slighted or underrepresented in historical scholarship... they seem to believe that they can alter the past and shape the future toward their own interests by rewriting history textbooks," (Sewall, 1988: 556). He believes that many revisions of textbooks to include minorities and common citizens are reasonable and long overdue, but that these inclusions could be politically damaging to the essential nature of history (Sewall, 1988: 556). In order to present American history accurately, citizens of all backgrounds should be included, not excluding women. Women are not a minority, numerically, and are part of every culture: black, white, Asian, Hispanic, and all other races and creeds in society. In most historical journals' editors focus a great deal of their energies on including articles covering multi-cultural topics. It is not possible to be multi-cultural if the women in each culture are to be largely ignored.
Women have made significant contributions to society throughout history; unfortunately, little of these activities have been recorded accurately for future generations. Steinem (1992) discusses the movie, "The Right Stuff." In this movie, tests were given to astronauts to prove their strength and agility to withstand the trials of space travels. Steinem points out that although twenty-five women had completed and passed the same tests as John Glenn and Alan Shepherd, they were not included in the movie, which details the history of the Mercury space program. Steinem comments on why things like this occur:

...there's a reason why current studies show that, [with young women]...intellectual self-esteem tends to diminish with every year of higher education. We are learning from texts in which fewer and fewer women are visible, sitting in classrooms where women are less honored in authority, and obeying administrations in which women are rare at the top (Steinem, 1992: C16).

Steinem suggests that in the process of learning, women are not learning about their peers, and are getting the message that women are not as important as men.

What exactly is included in textbooks by historians about women since World War II? In American History for Today, coverage about women is limited to one page (out of 112) concerning American history since World War II. This page is a short discussion by the author, who is a woman, and contains part of an article by Bella Abzug called, "An Article for Women's Liberation Day," (Branson, 1977: 538). It is interesting to note the last comment by the author on the subject of women: "They, [women], looked hard at textbooks to be sure that little girls were not 'brainwashed' into
thinking they are destined to play inferior roles in life," (Branson, 1977: 538) (See Appendix B).

It seems that after A People and a Nation was written, another analysis of the importance of women's inclusion in American History textbooks was accomplished. In this textbook, the importance of women during World War II and the accomplishments that were made were included, contrary to American History for Today. The two aspects of women and World War II which are included in the text are women in the armed services and women in labor and production. The author delineates the number of women in the armed forces, but declines to indicate in what capacity they were utilized. The same type of discussion concerning women in the work force is presented, but the author does not explain how they were important (Ver Steeg and Hofstadter, 1981: 697). This second textbook was written later than the one mentioned above, and a discussion of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was included. Also included in the text is a discussion about gender discrimination, NOW, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and how the deadline for ratification of the ERA by the states was extended to June 1982. Women are referred to as a minority, although at that time in history women constituted 51% of the population, (Ver Steeg and Hofstadter, 1981: 803-804). Coverage about women was limited to six paragraphs, and the average page in the text is eight to nine paragraphs long. In other words, out of 125 pages dealing with this period in history, less than one page dealt with women (See Appendix C). It is universally understood that women have accomplished more than these two
aforementioned topics within the 30 year time span in which they occur. Another textbook, published four years later, includes more about women.

Finally, in United States History, the authors present a slightly greater coverage of women and American history. The authors not only delineate that women were in the armed forces in World War II, but also explain what their jobs entailed. In addition, when describing how women went to work in greater numbers during the war, more detail is provided about what types of jobs they acquired. Women are not mentioned again until the 1960s, similar to the second text discussed above. However, the text does mention the fact that women were not a minority trying to gain rights, but a majority (51% of the population). Included in the text is a discussion of NOW and its founder, Betty Friedan. Later, the authors mention women in the context of the Equal Rights Amendment. The positions given to women in President Carter's Cabinet, female astronauts chosen by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the passage of the ERA in Congress are all mentioned for the history of the late 1970s. Lastly, an explanation of the ERA's nonratification is also provided (Ahlquist, 1984: 582; 583; 669-670; 703-704; 715-716; 730.) (See Appendix D). By not mentioning women in the 1950s, one thing that the author may be implying is that women were not as important in American society in the 1950s. This is not true. Whether a woman works to keep her household running smoothly and makes sure her children are educated properly, and are happy, and/or she works to
put food in the mouths of her family, a woman's contributions are important. How can this omission of women from American History high school textbooks be remedied?
The purpose of this study is to take a new approach to women's history. Women have always been stereotyped in one way or another. For instance, in the 1950s women were categorized as being highly domesticated. Yet many women did indeed work outside of the domestic realm. The United States Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, reported that in 1950 29% of the total labor force consisted of women, which constituted 31% of the female population, and 25% of the married female population. Employed married women constituted 52% of the female labor force. In 1960 the percentages were higher, with 33% of the total labor force consisting of women, which was 35% of the female population and 32% of the married female population. Also, 60% of the female labor force were married women (Baxandall, Gordon, Reverby, 1976: 405). What were these women's occupations? The leading ten occupations according to the census of 1950 were:

1. Stenographers, typists, and secretaries;
2. Other clerical workers;
3. Saleswomen;
4. Private household workers;
5. Teachers (elementary school);
6. Waitresses;
7. Bookkeepers;
8. Sewers and stitchers, in manufacturing;
9. Nurses (registered); and

Another example of stereotyping women exists in describing their activities in the women's movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the history texts discussed above, it seems that women
were very active in the movement, and worked hard for reform. What is missing are the women who were happy working within the home, and while doing so were making a significant contribution to society. One author talks about this problem when she writes about women in the American West. Riley (1992) writes:

"...we must avoid the trap of 'colonizing' types of women--older, single, religious, lesbian, women of color--that is, the trap of invariably grouping them and applying existing paradigms of Anglo American, middle-class women's history to them...we need to recognize the diversity within groups of women and validity of their cultures in their own right rather than as simply subgroups of the larger society," (P. 2).

This is what has been done in American history, not only for the history of the American West, but also for the history of women since World War II. If history textbooks are to be reformed in any way regarding women, then they must not be written by any one woman's group point of view, but by all women's points of view. The traditional feminists are the major group of women trying to change history textbooks, and they too can fall into this trap of "colonizing" women.

As illustrated by Riley (1992) American women are judged by the way they fit into American society. Unfortunately, society's judgements are based on the man's perspective. For instance, it seems that women who take the traditional feminist point of view want women to break into the "man's world." Women who hold this traditional feminist view want women to have all the same rights and amenities as men. How does this represent women? Do women not want to be women in their own right, and judged by their own standards, instead of a male standard? Riley succinctly
illustrates this point, "To assume that women could be significant only when they expanded, or fled from, the domestic realm is to impute powerlessness to women, power to men...women's contributions [are] worthy and satisfying in their own right," (P. 4). This is a point which is important to some contemporary feminists. Women need to find their own standards of what it means to be a productive woman. For example, Riley makes the point that the western economy hinged on the ability of women to change raw goods into finished products (P. 4). Not only the traditional feminist viewpoint, but also the contemporary feminists viewpoint must be included in American history textbooks, as well as all other women's points of view. How can this be accomplished?

This study is designed to capture the many differing views held by women. By surveying the attitudes of women, one can understand better that the brief history of women presented by historians is not sufficient. Riley (1992) illustrates this approach to studying history, and its importance in learning: "To understand the past, to discover its meaning, we must let its inhabitants speak for themselves even if their words and actions fail to provide instructive lessons for those living in the present," (P. 3). History can not only be a history of "important people", because the important people of the nation may not have the same ideas, feelings, and passions as the common peoples. Studying the common woman's view seems to be the best way to avoid stereotyping women.
SURVEY ANALYSIS

In order to gain more insight about the role of women in American history, a survey was administered to women in the city of Muncie, Indiana (For a copy of the survey, see Appendix A). "Middletown was selected because the results in Muncie should be applicable to the greater national setting. The surveys were administered in-person. The population sample was based on education. Surveys were distributed to college professors, women in banking, working class women, and college students. For the college students and instructors, surveys were distributed in each of the six different colleges at Ball State University: College of Applied Sciences, College of Architecture and Planning, College of Business, College of Fine Arts, College of Sciences and Humanities, and the Teachers College.

Overall response was approximately 62%. Surveys were distributed to thirty-six female college instructors, and nineteen of the thirty-six women college instructors responded. This is a response rate of nearly 53%. Six out of the twelve college instructors who were asked to administer thirty surveys to students participated. Out of 180 surveys which were distributed to students, 112 responded. This is a response rate of approximately 62%. This response rate is higher than that of the college instructors. This may be due to the fact that the students were asked to fill out the surveys by an authority figure who had some perceived bureaucratic power over them. Out of the forty surveys
provided to women in banking, thirty responded. This is a response rate of 75%. The response rate was higher than in the other cases because the surveys were distributed by the head of the personnel department in each bank. Thirty surveys were distributed to working class women, and sixteen responded. This is a response rate of approximately 53%. The survey itself is divided into four categories: Demographics, Career, Family, and Beliefs. These categories were chosen because most history textbooks deal with these issues when discussing women. The respondent's answers will be evaluated within each of the categories.

**Demographics.** In the first question dealing with the age of the college instructors, two of the respondents were eighteen to twenty-five, and seventeen of the respondents were thirty-six to fifty-four. This was an expected response, because of the length of time an education one must obtain to be a college instructor. Another expected response was found when respondents reported that they were not ethnically diverse. Eighteen of the respondents were Caucasian, and one of the respondents was African-American. This trend is not unlike the national trend. In terms of education levels, one of the respondents had a high school diploma, two had bachelor degrees, eight had masters degrees, and eight also had doctorates. This was also an expected response, because many instructors are still working toward their doctorate, and some never will. Since the education level was varied, so were the incomes. Three reported having an income of $15,000 or below, one reported an income of $15,001 to $25,000, twelve reported an income
of $25,001 to $50,000, and three respondents reported an income of $50,001 or above.

A set of diverse responses were reported by bank employees. Seventeen of the respondents were eighteen to thirty-five years old, and twelve of the respondents were thirty-six to fifty-four years of age. Race reported was comparative nationally. Two of the respondents were African-American, one was Hispanic, two were Native-American, and twenty-four were Caucasian. Eighteen of the respondents reported having a high school degree, and eleven of the respondents reported having a bachelor degree. This response seems to correlate with the ages reported, because having attained education higher than a bachelors degree is not usually required for a job at a bank. Incomes seem to correlate with education. Five of the respondents reported having an income of $15,000 or below, sixteen of the respondents reported an income of $15,001 to $25,000, and twelve of the respondents reported having an income of $25,001 to $50,000.

In terms of age, eleven working class women were eighteen to twenty-five, and five of them were thirty-six to fifty-four. Fifteen of the respondents were caucasian and one was Native American. Fifteen of them had a high school diploma, and one of them had an associates degree. This was an anticipated response, because most working class persons do not need a college degree for the job they hold. The question of income generated some diverse responses, which was not expected. Six of the respondents reported
an income of 0-$15,000, six had an income of $15,001-$25,000, and four reported an income of $25,001-$50,000.

Students, as expected, were all of the age category of eighteen to twenty-five. Five were African-American, three were Asian, 99 were caucasian, three were Native American, and there was one no answer. 109 students reported obtaining a high school diploma, two of them an associate's degree, and one a bachelor degree. These were anticipated responses, because the majority of students attending Ball State University are undergraduates. Students were not instructed to give their parents' incomes, and therefore almost all of the students reported their incomes at $15,000 and below.

Career. Sixteen of the nineteen college instructors reported being satisfied with their career choice. Within this group, eleven indicated that they received support from their family, friends, and society. Nine out of the sixteen reported that family, friends, or society did not influence their career choice. It was expected that many would be satisfied with their career, and that they would receive support from outside sources, which would improve self-esteem. I was also expected that about half would not have relied on this support to make their career choice. It was supposed that for a woman to choose a career in higher education, and go against the traditional role, or elementary education, she would have to have enough confidence in herself to make that decision on her own.
Twenty five bank employees reported being satisfied with their career, and twenty-three of them were supported by family, friends, and society. Twenty of the respondents reported that they were not influenced by anyone when making their career choice. Since choosing banking as a career is not controversial for women, there would be no need for an influence on their decision by others, and support from others would likely follow from their choice in a career.

In terms of working class women, eleven were satisfied with their career, three were not satisfied, and two were neutral. Four of them were neutral or did not answer whether or not they got support from family, friends, and society, and twelve reported generating support. Most reported not being influenced in their choice by family, friends, or society. These last two responses were expected, because this also is not a controversial career choice.

For students, ten of the respondents did not answer and fourteen of the respondents answered neutral to all questions concerning career. Nine of the respondents reported they were not satisfied with their career choice. Within this category, the support received was distributed about evenly: four received positive support, two received negative support, and three received neutral support. Five of them were influenced by others in making their choice; similar to the answers given by college instructors. Seventy-nine of the respondents reported being satisfied with their career choice. Out of these seventy-nine, seventy-six received
positive support, and three answered neutral. It was expected that women satisfied with their career choices would be receiving positive reinforcement. Similar to the above findings, of the college students who were not satisfied with their career choice, about half were influenced by others when making their decision. This may be due to the fact of the respondents ages, and being influenced by parents when they made their career choice.

Family. Within this category, the respondents will be discussed in terms of their marital status and number of children. Four college instructors were single. The only patterns which existed in responses to the other questions dealing with family, were having had teachers as other influences in their lives. Four instructors were divorced, and the pattern which existed in responses to the other questions dealing with family, were that qualities in other persons that they admired were reported as holistic, or not as separate roles. Mothers and teachers were listed as influences for the majority of divorced respondents. Eleven of the respondents were married; ten of them with children. As a whole, qualities such as motherhood/fatherhood, being a wife/husband, and domestic abilities were reported as most important qualities in their mothers and fathers. Also, strength and intelligence were reported as most important qualities pertaining to heroes and other influences. Some of the heroes and other influences listed included teachers, family and friends, and one listed her husband. In terms of historical and religious figures, Eleanor Roosevelt, Ghandi, and St. Catherine were listed
as heroes and influences. As expected, teachers were a major influence in almost all of the respondents' lives. This is not surprising, since they choose education as a profession. All of the married respondents grew up with their mother and their father, which was also anticipated. It was expected as well that wives with children would admire their mother's qualities of being a wife, mother, and her domestic abilities.

Two of the bank employees were single, and one was single with a child. There was no pattern in their responses to the rest of the category. Eight of the respondents were divorced, and five of them had one to two children. Of the respondents which were divorced with children, the qualities seen most important in both parents were the categories of motherhood/fatherhood and caregiver. This was expected of women with children. Influences again included family and friends, as well as teachers. Strength and intelligence were seen as most important for their heroes and other influences. Some of the historical figures mentioned by bank employees were John F. Kennedy and Eleanor Roosevelt. In addition, there were nineteen married respondents, eleven with one to three children, and again as expected, the qualities of being a wife/husband, motherhood/fatherhood, and caregiver were seen as most important qualities of their parents. Family, friends, and boss were listed as other influences or heroes. Historical figures, religious figures, and interesting answers included Barbara Bush, Jesus Christ, and in-laws.
Two of the working class women were single, and no pattern existed in the responses given to the rest of the questions dealing with family. Grandparents and friends were listed as other influences or heroes. Two of the respondents were divorced, one with a child. As well, no patterns existed in the other responses given to the questions dealing with family. Twelve of the respondents were married, and had one to four children. The top four qualities which were listed as those they admired in their mother were motherhood, caregiver, strength, and intelligence. No pattern existed in the responses to the question of qualities most admired in their father. Friends, co-workers, husband, uncle, and aunt were other influences and heroes listed. One interesting response given to this question was the singing group the Beatles.

There was one divorced college student with two children, and ten students married without children. For those married, as was seen in the responses of the married college instructors, bank employees, and working class women, the categories of motherhood/fatherhood, wife/husband, and caregiver were seen as the most important qualities of both parents. Other influences and heroes included family, friends, husband, and teachers. Only one reported a religious figure, Jesus Christ. As to be expected with college students, 101 of them were single. In addition, two single college students reported having a child. For qualities most admired of both parents, the top four listed were motherhood/fatherhood, caregiver, intelligence, and strength. Influences and other heroes were family, friends, coaches,
teachers, and church pastor. What was found of the younger generation of students, was that pop culture figures instead of historical figures were the other influences and heroes listed. Madonna, Sylvester Stalone, Mel Gibson, Paula Abdul, and Larry Bird were all responses given. This exhibits that the younger generation has looked towards mass media, instead of history, to find women and men to emulate.

Beliefs. Respondents of the survey will be examined in terms of whether or not they considered themselves a feminist in terms of their own definition. Only one respondent answered no to the question of feminism, and one did not answer the question. Seventeen of the respondents answered yes to the question of feminism. All of the respondents knew other feminists, and all perceived them favorably. It was expected that women who have achieved a high level of scholastics would consider themselves feminists, according to the national average. Also, the responses to questions of being a feminist, knowing a feminist, and perceiving other feminists favorably were expected to correlate. There were over-arching definitions of feminism as equality between the sexes, political and legal rights for women, and a sense of self-worth. All of these definitions adhere to the traditional feminist definition. However, an interesting contrast existed between rating a woman's most important role in society, and rating where the respondent's personal priorities lie. The respondents reported that according to society it was most important to be a career woman and independent, but their own priorities lie with
being a wife and a mother. (See Appendix E for some responses to questions concerning definition of feminism, and perception of self [taken from all respondents].)

In addition to one no answer to the questions about feminism, bank employees were split on the subject. Fourteen reported that they were feminists according to their definitions, and as expected, all knew other feminists, but two of the respondents perceived them unfavorably (no explanation was given). There was no pattern found in the responses to the questions concerning women's roles. Fifteen of the respondents answered no to the question of feminism. Seven of them knew feminists and reported perceiving them negatively, neutral and positively. Similar to the bank employees who answered yes to the question of feminism, no pattern was found in responses to questions concerning women's roles.

In this category, one working class woman did not answer any of the questions, and one was not sure of her answers. Nine of the respondents reported being feminists, and all knew other feminists, and had favorable perceptions of them. It was expected, as in the other categories of women, that feminists would know other feminists, and have favorable perceptions of them. In the question concerning what society's most important role for women is, motherhood and individuality were the two most frequent answers given. There was no pattern found in the responses given about their own priorities as a woman.
Six of the college students did not answer, and sixty-one of the respondents reported they were feminists, only one of them did not know another feminist. Reporting that they knew other feminists is similar to the findings concerning college instructors, bank employees, and working class women. Only three reported negative perceptions, ten neutral, and two did not answer. There was no apparent pattern in the questions concerning women's roles. Forty-five of the respondents answered no to the question of feminism. Eleven of them did not know any feminists. Otherwise, the distribution of answers about perception of feminists were divided almost equally: nine positive, fourteen neutral, and eleven negative. Again, there was no pattern for the questions concerning women's roles. Overall, it was found that the responses of the students lacked the coherence of the college instructors, bank employees, and working class women.
CONCLUSION

As indicated above, women have not been adequately represented in American history textbooks. Women are not included in history texts as often as men. They seem to be included only in the contexts of World War II, the Women's Movement in the 1970s and the Equal Rights Amendment. Yet, many women have made significant contributions outside of this context. In addition, no studies were found dealing with women and how they are represented in American history textbooks. The emphasis in historical journals has been on making history more multi-cultural. Unfortunately, this process does not include women.

Secondly, the American female population is usually portrayed as feminist and active in women's causes. This is not necessarily the case. Women in the United States are as diversified as American men. This is indicated by the findings of the survey presented. Women cannot be stereotyped, because women of differing backgrounds have differing attitudes, feelings, and beliefs. Therefore, the history of American women should be documented accordingly. Women should be described as conservatives, liberals, homemakers, corporate executives, non-feminists, and feminists. Women should also be described diversely in each of these categories as well. If women are to be portrayed fairly in American history, they will be depicted as they would depict themselves. In other words, a common woman's history representing
every American woman, not a stereotypical woman's history representing a category of women.
APPENDIX A

THESIS SURVEY

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Age
   18-35  36-54  55-over

2. Education completed
   grammar school  junior high  high school  associate degree
   bachelor degree  masters degree  doctorate

3. Race
   African-American  Asian  Caucasian  Hispanic  Native American

4. Income
   15,000 and under  15,001-25,000  25,001-50,000
   50,001 and above

CAREER

1. What is your career?

2. Are you satisfied with your career choice?
   very satisfied  satisfied  neutral  somewhat satisfied
   not satisfied

3. If not, what other career would you have chosen?

4. How did your family perceive your career choice?
   very supportive  supportive  neutral  somewhat supportive
   not supportive
5. How did your friends perceive your career choice?
   very supportive  supportive  neutral  somewhat supportive  not supportive

6. How did your society view your career choice?
   very appropriate  appropriate  neutral  somewhat appropriate  appropriate in certain cases  not appropriate

7. Did anyone's perception change or influence your career choice?
   family  friends  society  other  not applicable

FAMILY
1. Marital Status
   single  married  divorced  widowed

2. How many children do you have?

3. If you grew up with your mother, what qualities did your mother have that you admired the most? (rank from 1 to 6, 1 being most important, 6 being least important)
   ___ wife  ___ domestic abilities
   ___ mother  ___ strength
   ___ caregiver  ___ intelligence

4. If you grew up with your father, what qualities did your father have that you admired the most? (rank from 1 to 6, 1 being most important, 6 being least important)
   ___ husband  ___ domestic abilities
   ___ father  ___ strength
   ___ caregiver  ___ intelligence

5. Who are your other influences and/or heroes?
6. Please list those qualities which you admired about those other influences and heroes.  (rank from 1 to 6, 1 being most important, 6 being least important)

___ husband/wife  ___ domestic abilities
___ father/mother  ___ strength
___ caregiver      ___ intelligence

BELIEFS

1. In your own words, what is your definition of feminism?

2. According to your definition, do you consider yourself a feminist?
   yes  no

3. According to your definition, do you know any feminists?  yes/no
   If so, who?
   mother  father  husband  mentor  boss  colleague  other

4. If you do know any feminists, what is your perception of these persons?
   favorable  somewhat favorable  neutral  somewhat unfavorable  unfavorable

5. What do you believe that a woman's most important role is in society?  (rank from 1 to 4, 1 being most important, 4 being least important)

___ being independent  ___ mother
___ wife                ___ career woman

6. Please rank yourself in terms of your own priorities.  (1 being most important, 4 being least important)

___ being independent  ___ mother
___ wife                ___ career woman

7. Does society's perception of your priorities change or influence your perception of yourself?  yes/no  How?
STATING THE CASE FOR WOMEN

As they watched Blacks, Chicanos, Indians, and Asians push for their civil rights, many women began to wonder why their sex should not state its case, also. If one looks at the statistics, it is easy to see that women in America today are more important than ever:

Women outnumber men by almost five and a half million, according to the 1970 census. Fifty-three percent of the eligible voters are women. Women constitute forty percent of the total working force. Nevertheless:
In 1969 the average woman who worked full time earned only $60 for every $100 earned by the average man. In 1976 there was no woman in the United States Senate. In 1975-1976 only 18 women (7 more than in 1973-1974) served in the House of Representatives, compared to 417 men. By 1976 there had never been a female Supreme Court Justice. Only one woman was a member of the President's cabinet in 1976. Only one of the 50 states had a woman governor in 1976.

Many women see such statistics as a terrible injustice. Bella Abzug, congresswoman from New York, has called them a national scandal. In an article in 1971, she declared: "Women members of Congress are not only scarce, they appear to be a vanishing species. Ten years ago there were 19 women in Congress...Today...The freeze-out of women from political power is almost total, and it is one of the ironies of history that ever since women won the vote [1920], they have been using it almost exclusively to elect men to office. We're going to change that..."

Shirley Chisholm tried to become the Democratic nominee for President in 1972. During the election campaign she said she
experienced far more discrimination as a woman than she had as a black.

Signs were unmistakable during the 1970's that women did not intend to allow things to continue as they were. Women's organizations brought pressure to bear on legislatures. They insisted that laws which discriminated against women be repealed. They demanded that women be appointed to key posts. They opened their own banks. They looked hard at textbooks to be sure that little girls were not "brainwashed" into thinking they are destined to play inferior roles.¹

¹Taken from American History for Today, p. 538.
Eventually, all men between eighteen and forty-five were subject to the draft for military service, and for the first time women were allowed to volunteer for the armed forces. Altogether, about 15 million men and more than two hundred thousand women served in the armed forces.

Economic Mobilization

Vital to wartime production were the six million women who filled the jobs created by wartime needs--two million in offices and at least another two million in heavy industry. For the first time in American history, older married women were in the majority among women workers.

Blacks and Wartime

By the end of the war, 4,000 black women had joined the Women's Auxiliary Corps.

STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

That same year [1970] the House of Representatives passed the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA); it had been bottled up in committee for almost twenty-two years. The amendment is worded simply: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of sex."

Much had happened since the Industrial Revolution to change the traditional role of women; however, society often refused to recognize their new roles. Although some progress had been made by
women in the areas of politics and education, by the 1960s women were still discriminated against in employment. Usually they had to settle for low paying jobs. On the average, their salaries were 40 percent lower than those of men. Women also found it difficult to get credit and to buy or rent property.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was intended to end job discrimination on account of sex as well as race, religion and national origin. But several years passed before the act was invoked for women, and then it was militant feminists who forced the government to act. Groups such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) used political and legal means.

The Equal Rights Amendment created a storm of protest among those who believed women would be giving up more than they would be gaining if the amendment became law. Powerful groups, some led by women, spoke out against it. By 1979, when the deadline for ratification was reached, only thirty-five of the necessary thirty-eight states had ratified the amendment. After much lobbying by pro-ERA groups, Congress voted to extend the deadline to June 1982.²

² Taken from A People and a Nation, pp. 679-690; 803-804.
APPENDIX D

THE ARMED FORCES

Women volunteers filled noncombat roles. They joined the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAACS), the Navy's Women Appointed for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES), the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS), and the Women's Reserves of the Coast Guard and the Marine Corps. Women worked in such roles as clerks, cooks, mechanics, radio operators, and airplane spotters. To free male pilots for battle, women flew planes from factories to military bases and towed targets for gunnery practice.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

One group that fought inequality was technically a majority. In 1965 women made up nearly 51 percent of the population in the United States. Still, they were excluded from most careers with power, prestige, and high pay. Betty Friedan stressed this inequality in her 1963 book, The Feminine Mystique. It described the social pressures against women working outside the home.

In 1966 Friedan founded the National Organization for Women (NOW). Within a decade it had some 60,000 members. The organization focused on economic and social issues. Members called for equal pay for equal work, equal opportunities for women in any job, and public day-care centers for the children of mothers who worked.

NOW became a focus of a fast-growing women's rights movement. The movement made use of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The act
barred job discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

EXPANDING CIVIL RIGHTS

Women working for pay in the 1970s found, as in the past, very few jobs offering high salaries. The average working woman in 1975 made only 57 percent of the pay of the average working man. Some women hoped to correct this inequality with the aid of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Proposed by Congress in 1972, the amendment forbade discrimination on the basis of sex.

To become law, the Equal Rights Amendment needed to be ratified by 38 states. However, the amendment sparked sharp controversy. Some opponents believed that women already had equal rights under the Constitution. Others feared that the amendment would make women subject to the military draft or would change in other ways the woman's traditional role in the United States.

GAINS AND LOSSES FOR WOMEN

For many women, a key goal was economic equality. About 80 percent of all working women held low-paying jobs, laboring as clerks, typists, and waitresses. Women earned an average of 60 cents for every dollar earned by men.

Still, women made gains during the Carter years. More and more women held professional jobs, working as doctors, engineers, company managers, airline pilots, and college professors. In 1980 women earned half of all master's degrees and one third of all doctoral degrees.
Women entered a previously all-male field in January 1978, when the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) chose 35 new astronauts. Six of them were women, slated to be mission scientists and flight engineers for NASA's space shuttle program. President Carter appointed three women to cabinet positions. Jaunita Morris Kreps--vice-president of Duke University and a director on the New York Stock Exchange--was named to head the Department of Commerce. Patricia Tober Harris--professor, diplomat, lawyer--became the head of the Department of Urban Development (HUD). Judge Shirley M. Hufstedler headed the new Department of Education, created in October 1979.

Carter also supported the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), passed by Congress in 1972, the act forbade discrimination of the basis of sex. However, in 1977, motions to ratify the amendment were rejected in several states.

The ERA needed approval by 3 more states to reach the total of 38 required for ratification. Fearing that the ERA could not be approved by March 1979, the legal deadline, supporters asked for more time for ratification. In October 1978 Congress voted to extend the deadline for 39 months.

CRITICS OF GOVERNMENT CUTBACKS

However, the women's movement--and a good many of the American people--was pleased with Reagan's appointment of a woman to the Supreme Court. In September 1981 Arizona judge Sandra Day O'Connor became the nation's first female Supreme Court justice. Highly qualified, O'Connor was an ideal choice for this position. The United States Senate confirmed her appointment by a vote of 99 to 0.³

³ Taken from United States History, pp. 582, 583, 669-670, 703-704, 715-716, 720.
APPENDIX E

DEFINITIONS OF FEMINISM (IN RANDOM ORDER)

"Combining the qualities of both sexes"

"Independent, strong, kind"

"A Lady who acts and wants to be treated like a women [sp]. Who takes care of herself and is proud of it."

"Equalitarian, mutual relationship with males...each recognizing their own strengths."

"Being independent, and strong--I think women should not be displaced or looked down on but I think men should still open doors and be a gentleman."

"A woman's belief in her own abilities to take care of herself."

"Men who hate to work for a woman supervisor"

"A woman whose intelligence, strength and presence is directly proportionate to sense of true self and sovereignty over her own life."

"The thought that women are being repressed in society."

"Support of women as a strong influence in society."

"I believe in feminism as much as I believe in masculinism. We should only consider humanism. [Feminists are] people who unfortunately do put the concerns of women on a platform different than the concern for humans."

"Caring, understanding, looking out for others."

"It is just the same as male schovenism [sp] but ours is taken more drastically."

"Being receptive and sympathetic to a woman's intelligence and feelings."

"Acting or looking like society says a female should look."

"Believing in myself as a woman. Being able to achieve in a man's world--not trying to push my beliefs on other people, but having them as a personal goal."
"My definition of feminism is being able to work as hard as and have the same opportunity as a man but still be considered a "lady" and be able to recognize that men and women are not the same but different."

"Not separating fantasy from reality."

ANSWERS TO, "HOW DOES SOCIETY'S PERCEPTION OF YOUR PRIORITIES CHANGE OR INFLUENCE YOUR PERCEPTION OF YOURSELF?"
(IN RANDOM ORDER)

"I do what I want within reason."

"No, I have always wanted to have children but no husband. I know I will be married someday, but my children and my happiness would always come first."

"'Something's wrong with me if motherhood isn't top priority. I am abnormal, and therefore, if I have children I will be an awful mother.' I begin to wonder if the people who say this are right. Usually they are males who I find extremely chauvinistic. By the way, I chose not to be a teacher because it was what people expected of me. Architecture was the last thing they thought I could do. To prove a point for myself and other women, I ignored personal choices because I didn't want to fill a stereotype. Now I am unhappy. People who choose 'women' roles should not be turned [off], even motherhood can be a wonderful profession--just let the men know who's boss!"

"Hard to manage being a mother and career women [sp]. Which do you dedicate your life to and which takes priority. Hard to believe that kids are getting all attention, etc. that they need with a career mom."

"It is a definite influence. I often feel pressure that one of my main goals as a woman should be to become a mother and this is not a main goal of mine. It is hard not to feel pressure to be a certain way but I am resisting this pressure."

"Doubt that my priorities are straight. Expect my priorities to change as I grow older."

"It reinforces how I already feel about who I am and how I should be (my role)."

"I think society impresses upon women to be good at all things at all times. I do believe that I am career-oriented in some part due to society and its positive
response to this choice. I believe I am looked at with more respect for my ambition to succeed. The mother and wife don't get nearly as much respect as the career woman, in my opinion."

"Sometimes I feel like I'm 'not as good', so to speak as other women because I don't want to have children. Even my family tells me that my decision is wrong and that I won't be able to lead a complete and happy life without children. Hearing that makes me feel inadequate at times."

"Society is very judgmental. No one cares if I 'do it all' so long as I do everything well. If I err in any one area--job--as a mother--as a wife--I am seen as unable to prioritize or as an overall failure. No one can, really, do it all--nor is anyone equally strong in all areas. That's key to the woman's dilemma today--a full time job, a full time paycheck, a full time mother, a full time wife--and time for self is what usually suffers."

"This is two sided--on one side I look to the Christians in society and the opinion is that woman [sp] should devote themselves solely to their home and children. on the other side, I am a career woman and my employer and co-workers demand 100% of my energy. I feel torn, but financial[ly] and mentally I know I have to find a happy medium. I do believe there is room for both a career and a family. Hopefully I'll be better to both sides due to my decision."

"Continually reassessing my value system and beliefs."

"It influences me in terms of stimulating my thought process to consider what I want from life, but it has not forced me into changing my priorities for myself. Society does have a great impact on a woman based on what it feels [that] a whole woman should view as their priorities and does apply pressure to adopt society's grand plan."

"I think a women's [sp] first priority should be her family. That does not coincide with society."

"Being single at 31 years old and not having any children, I seem to think society feels there is something wrong with me as a women [sp]. I've had several comments on "what is the problem."

"Sometimes, I feel my choice to be a good wife and someday mother is looked down upon. However, I feel that
whatever I choose to do as a woman I should do to my best ability. I think in some ways this is in line with the woman's movement."

"It doesn't. I am a Christian and all of the things I need to do as a woman are outlined in the Bible. I am to be a good wife, respecting my husband as he respects me, a good mother, teaching my children how to be kind, generous and faithful to others and the Lord, and a role model to other women in the community by showing them that a Christian embodies love and truth, not hate, discrimination, or discouragement, and that a true Christian is not one who is judgmental."

"Sometimes there is pressure to have children from society in general. It's as though you're not a real woman unless you've had children. Although I respect those women who are mothers. I do not pressure them to be more devoted to their careers. I always find myself in a defensive posture when children enter the conversation because I know I will feel guilty because I chose a career as my way of life. That's how society influences my perception of myself."

"I do and have done what I want to do (most of the time)---But I honestly think my grandmother, a farm wife (farmers have always been equal opportunity employers!!) was happier and knew exactly what her 'job description' was. I do often feel that each of my roles--career, mother, wife--have been somewhat shortchanged."


